

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LA PAZ 02268 281947Z
ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SCA-01 DHA-02 L-03 H-01
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02
JUSE-00 /034 W
-----290454Z 013049 /15
R 281928Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4641

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC, BL
SUBJECT: AMERICAN PRISONERS

1. RUTH FERNANDEZ (PLEASE PROTECT HER AS SOURCE) SAID SHE HAS MEETING SCHEDULED WITH PRESIDENT BANZER TUESDAY, MARCH 29, FOR EXPRESS PURPOSE OF BEING BRIEFED BY HIM ON U.S. PRISONERS. SHE PROMISED TO CALL AFTERWARD TO INFORM US ABOUT CONVERSATION.

2. AN EXCELLENT FRIEND OF THE EMBASSY HAS PREPARED MEMO TO GIVE TO PRESIDENT BANZER ON U.S. PRISONERS BASED ON LAST JACK ANDERSON ARTICLE. SAYS HE PREDICTS IN MEMO THAT MORE ARTICLES WILL COME OUT IN U.S. DAMAGING BOLIVIA IMAGE UNLESS PROMPT ACTION TAKEN. HE RECOMMENDS IMMEDIATE EXPULSION OF SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PRISONERS AS "UNDESIREABLES", SUGGESTING PRESIDENT CAN INFORM LOCAL PUBLIC OPINION THAT HE IS "CLEANSING" ENVIRONMENT OF BAD ELEMENTS AND THAT U.S. IS COOPERATING BY IMMEDIATELY REPATRIATING ITS CITIZENS. OUR FRIEND HAS BEEN ADVISED THAT PRESIDENT WILL SEE HIM AT FIRST OPPORTUNITY. HE PROMISES INFORM US OF PRESIDENT'S REACTION.

3. COL. APARICIO, DNSP, TOLD US THAT AT MARCH 21
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PAGE 02 LA PAZ 02268 281947Z

MEETING OF MINISTRY INTERIOR WITH JUDGES AND FISCALS, EX-SUBSECRETARY LEDESMA, DEMONSTRATED SOMEWHAT NEGATIVE VIEWS TO MINISTER'S INSTRUCTIONS TO ACCELERATE TRIALS OF U.S. PRISONERS. AS RESULT, ACCORDING TO APARICIO, MINISTER ASKED FOR LEDESMA' RESIGNATION. LUIS BALLIVIAN HAS BEEN NAMED TO REPLACE LEDESMA. HE IS ABOUT 49 YEARS OLD, IS ASSOCIATED WITH "PRESENCIA" NEWSPAPER AND WAS ACTIVE

IN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY. POSITION IS VITAL ONE
TO U.S. EFFORTS TO EXPEDITE JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS AND
COUNSELOR BEAL WILL CALL ON HIM PROMPTLY.

4. CAN ANYTHING BE DONE TO SPEED UP THE SENATE CONSIDER-
ATION OF THE MEXICAN TREATY ON EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS, SO THAT
WE CAN HAVE A NEGOTIATING TEAM COME TO LA PAZ?
MANY FRIENDS TELL US THAT JUDGES WOULD BE MORE INCLINED
TO ADJUDICATE CASES WHERE A GUILTY FINDING IS LIKELY IF
THEY KNEW THAT THEY WERE NOT PERSONALLY CONDEMNING U.S.
CITIZENS TO FURTHER TIME IN BOLIVIAN JAILS, COMMONLY
REGARDED BY BOLIVIANS OF ANY SENSITIVITY AS AWFUL.

5. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR U.S. JUSTICE DEPT TO HAVE APPRO-
PRIATE U.S. ATTORNEYS WORK UP CONSPIRACY CHARGES ON SOME
U.S. PRISONERS AND THEN AUTHORIZE US TO USE THOSE CHARGES
TO REQUEST THAT THEY BE TURNED OVER TO U.S.
JURISDICTION FOR TRIAL. I AM NOT AT ALL SURE GOB WOULD
ACCEPT THIS, BUT WE WILL NOT ACTUALLY KNOW UNLESS WE
PRESENT REQUEST FORMALLY TO FOREIGN MINISTRY.
STEDMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRISONER EXCHANGE, PRISONERS WELFARE, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LAPAZ02268
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770106-0883
Format: TEL
From: LA PAZ
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770316/aaaaanri.tel
Line Count: 83
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a4e339b1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SCS
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2978977
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMERICAN PRISONERS
TAGS: CASC, BL, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a4e339b1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009